

"Channel Marketing *Reinvented* for Today's Online Customer"



2015 Electrical Channel Media Planning Information

An Educational Piece From ElectricSmarts

Sorting Out Your Stats ...What you need to Know About Metrics

By Keith Peck, President

For years ElectricSmarts has not only provided you with widespread promotion of your products through your distribution partners, but endeavored to give you clear metrics of views and clicks so you can measure our value. Over the last few years we have seen some volatile swings in our content stats. Because we want and need to be both accurate and transparent we're taking this opportunity to educate our customers about the impact of indexing robots, spiders, and crawlers on website traffic.

"Spiders and robots are applications that crawl the Web indexing and retrieving content, usually for the benefit of search engines, information resources, and news organizations.

Like all websites, especially content rich search sites like ours, site traffic is generated not only by people (organic traffic) but by "creepy-crawlies: spiders, bots, and other slithery things". Not only the likes of Google, Yahoo, and Bing crawl the web to index and categorize information, but countless numbers of other unidentified entities do as well.

"Every day, millions of people surf the internet. But they're slowly becoming outnumbered by another entity on the web: robots. A new report by Incapsula, a company that manages web traffic and security for websites, estimates that humans only account for 40 percent of the traffic to any given website.*

Are Spiders and Bots inherently bad? Not at all. The purpose of ElectricSmarts Network is to promote your content to viewers who may want to buy, sell or specify your products. Being indexed by others who share links back to your content helps expand your reach. However, the other side of the coin is that the randomness of these robotic indexers can create volatile dips and spikes that distort the steady growth in organic traffic that ElectricSmarts has built year after year.

As ElectricSmarts has continued to double and triple our distributor syndication network, as well as add new content delivery tools (Newsletter Builder, Smart eCat, Mobile Apps) in our efforts to steadily increase organic traffic, it is frustrating to see overall numbers spike up or down. Is this just an ElectricSmarts problem? Hardly.

"The percent of bots on the web has been slowly growing. In 2012, humans were almost half the web traffic, losing to the bots by just one percent. Consider that a spider can be any application that searches or indexes the Web, from the crawler that indexes pages for search engines like Google to the bot written by a computer science student in a sophomore "computer" class. People write and use these applications for a variety of purposes and range of activities. Their use is more widespread than most nonprogrammers might think."*

So what are we doing about it? ElectricSmarts is in the midst of creating a totally new stats package to deal with this and several other issues we've discussed. Yes, the new stats package will be more graphical, contain much more information and be easier to use and understand. In addition we are investing significant resources to identify and segregate the traffic you see into two categories; Web Crawler Traffic and Organic Traffic . You will see both, but now you'll understand the difference between the volatility of "bot" activity and the steady growth of organic "people" traffic. In any case, despite these fluctuations in "bot" activity, our organic traffic numbers are strong as we continue to increase our reach to electrical professionals through our growing distributor syndication network.

* (From Smithsonian.com 4/4/14)

The ElectricSmarts Network

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